

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/552,878

Examiner

Gregory R. Del Cotto

Applicant(s)

LANGFORD, TERRENCE R

Art Unit

1796

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to RCE filed 8/20/07.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 14-22 renumbered 1-9.
3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
 1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

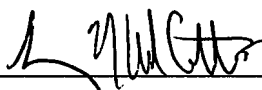
Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date 11/9/07.
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____

GREGORY DELCOTTO
PRIMARY EXAMINER



EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 8/20/07 has been entered.

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Gavin J. Milczarek-Desai on November 9, 2007.

The application has been amended as follows:

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The Claims:

In claim 14, line 1, after "instrument" insert – that comes into contact with a body

In claim 14, line 3, delete "and secure" and insert -- , through a holder, --.

In claim 14, line 4, delete "in a fixed position".

In claim 14, line 9, after "source" insert – wherein said means is located prior to the introduction of said water into said reservoir --.

REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

Note that, Applicant's amendments, Applicant's arguments, and the Examiner's Amendment are sufficient to place the instant claims in condition for allowance. Of the references of record, the most pertinent is Kasting, Jr. et al (US 5,520,893). Kasting, Jr. et al teach medical instruments which are sterilized in a portable apparatus that provides a low volume, high pressure flow of continuously circulating water containing about 2 to 6 ppm of ozone. See Abstract. However, Kasting, Jr. et al do not teach or suggest an apparatus for cleaning and sterilizing an instrument comprising a chamber adapted to connectorlessly engage through a holder, an instrument placed within said chamber, a pressurized water reservoir in fluid connection with said chamber, a re-circulating water pump in fluid connection with said water reservoir, a water source in fluid connection with said water reservoir, and a means for introducing ozone into said water from the water source which is located prior to the introduction of the water into the reservoir wherein said re-circulating water pump provides sterile water by re-circulating ozonated water within said reservoir.

None of the references of record, alone or in combination, teach or suggest an apparatus for cleaning and sterilizing an instrument comprising a chamber adapted to connectorlessly engage through a holder, an instrument placed within said chamber, a pressurized water reservoir in fluid connection with said chamber, a re-circulating water pump in fluid connection with said water reservoir, a water source in fluid connection with said water reservoir, and a means for introducing ozone into said water from the water source which is located prior to the introduction of the water into the reservoir wherein said re-circulating water pump provides sterile water by re-circulating ozonated

water within said reservoir. Accordingly, since the prior art fails to teach or suggest such an apparatus as recited by the instant claims, the instant claims are deemed allowable.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Gregory R. Del Cotto whose telephone number is (571) 272-1312. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon. thru Fri. from 8:30 AM to 6:00 PM.


If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Harold Pyon can be reached on (571) 272-1498. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Application/Control Number: 10/552,878

Page 5

Art Unit: 1796



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Art Unit 1796

GRD

November 12, 2007